

Commission on Conservation & Agriculture



Chairperson	Elisabeth Holder ('22)	
Vice-Chair	Brian Gartner ('23)	
Members	Michael Thomas ('20)	Kate Miller ('23)
	Jane Brawerman ('23)	Larry Owens ('20)
	Katharine Owens ('22)	Bob Daniels ('22)
	Barbara Schukoske ('23)	David Bauer ('22)
	James Miller ('23)	
Alternates	Ellen Lukens ('23)	Judy Konopka ('22)
Staff	Marek Kozikowski, AICP, City Planner	

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, September 15, 2020
TIME: 7:30 p.m.

Meeting was held online. Public Access was provide by:

1. Going to <https://webex.com> and joining the meeting using the appropriate meeting number and password
2. Launching the WebEx application and joining the meeting using the appropriate meeting number and password
3. Via telephone at 1-408-418-9388 and the appropriate access code

Meeting Number/Access Code: 1738097727

Event Password: Conservation

In attendance: Commissioners Elisabeth Holder, Michael Thomas, Barbara Schukoske, Katherine Owens, Kate Miller, Bob Daniels, James Miller, Jane Brawerman, and Ellen Lukens. Marek Kozikowski, City Planner

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:33pm.

B. Accept the Agenda

A motion to move to accept the agenda made by Bob Daniels and seconded by Katherine Owens passed unanimously.

C. Public Forum

None.

D. Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of Minutes from the July 21, 2020 Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 meeting made by James Miller and seconded by Bob Daniels passed 6-0 (Barbara Schukoske and Ellen Lukens abstained).

E. Request for Comment

1. Tall Timbers Road- Open Space Donation (Parcel 40-0057)

Marek and Chris Holden, Deputy Director Public Works presented the parcel as an open space donation. It is a land locked open space parcel created through the subdivision process. James Miller and Mike Thomas agreed to visit the property with City staff and report back to the Commission.

2. 148 Arbutus Street- Open Space Donation (Parcel 38-0198)

Marek presented the parcels as an open space donation. It is an open space parcel created through the subdivision process. The parcel contains a City sewer pump station and sewer easements. James Miller was familiar with the property. He offered to visit the property and report back. The Commission agreed that there is a need for criteria to determine if these types of parcels should be acquired as a donation by the City.

3. Country Club Road- Open Space Donation (Parcel 07-0029)

If you require special accommodations for any meeting, please call the ADA Coordinator at (860) 638-4540, (voice) or (860) 638-4812 (TDD/TTY), or the Town Clerk's Office at (860) 638-4910 at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Marek presented the parcels as an open space donation. It is a land locked, undeveloped parcel adjacent to Smith Park. The Commission noted the value of the property and possible existing trail encroachments. A motion to recommend that the city acquire this parcel as a donation was made by James Miller and seconded by Bob Daniels passed unanimously.

F. Officers and Committee Reports

1. Chairman's Report

No update.

2. Trails Committee

i. Trails Work at Guida and Wilcox

Elisabeth Holder, James Miller, and Michael Thomas reported that they worked to clear paths including cutting trees. More trees have fallen at Wilcox. Marek offered to reach out to Public Works for assistance clearing some of the larger trees. It was noted that blocked trails has decrease the amount of ATV use on the trails.

3. Agriculture Committee

i. Farmers Market Update

Jane Brawerman reported that the farmer's market has been well attended with long lines and live music. The Commission suggested that vendors should put up signs of what they are selling that day and suggested that the market include a bakery vendor.

ii. Farm Survey Update

Bob Daniels reported that the survey was disturbed and many responses came back. He noted that the results suggested that farming activity is more likely unprofitable, farm land is taxed too high, and there is no young generation of farmers. The Commission suggest that Rebecca Isaacson could be invited to discuss the results.

4. Outreach Committee

No update.

5. Open Space Management Committee

No update.

6. Open Space Acquisition Committee

i. Pending Properties (Livingston, Country Club Rd, Chiaravallo)

Marek reported that a lot line revision map is being created to cut out a lot around the existing dwelling on the Livingston property. There was no update for the Country Club Road property. The Chiaravallo acquisition is complete.

ii. 2020 Acquisitions (Newfield Street, Westlake Drive, Majestic Oaks Drive, and East Street)

Marek reported that he is working with an appraiser on a contract for the East Street property. The Westlake Drive property is on hold since the large parcel is currently under contract for purchase by the adjacent property owner. The owner of the Newfield Street property obtained their own yellow book appraisal. The Commission agreed that the City should obtain its own appraisal of the property. Marek reported that the property is protected by the Transfer Act for any potential ground water contamination from the adjacent property. Furthermore, no ground water testing was performed on the property.

iii. DEEP Open Space Grant

No update.

iv. Sunshine Realty, LLC Property

Marek reported that the owner's agent has been meeting with the City on the potential acquisition. Furthermore, Marek has obtained two quotes for appraisals. James Miller reported that the Connecticut Farmland Trust was unable to fund the acquisition.

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iv. Millbrook Acres LLC (Parcel 40-0093)

G. Old Business

1. Timber Management and Southern Border Safety

No update.

2. POCD Update

Marek reported that the editor, Krishna Winston, provided notes and he is working through them. The consultant was in the process of updating the implementation table. Ellen Lukens wanted to confirm the edges of the Guida Farm Greenway.

H. New Business

1. Climate Emergency Declaration

Elisabeth Holder reported that the Common Council adopted a climate emergency declaration. She suggested that the Commission should review the document and see how it can be applied to the Commission's goals and ability to acquire state grants.

I. Member Forum

Ellen Lukens wants to ensure that we have the Red Maple Swamp protected as open space. It is the largest vernal pool complex in Connecticut.

J. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn made by Michael Thomas and seconded by Katherine Owens passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:34pm.